

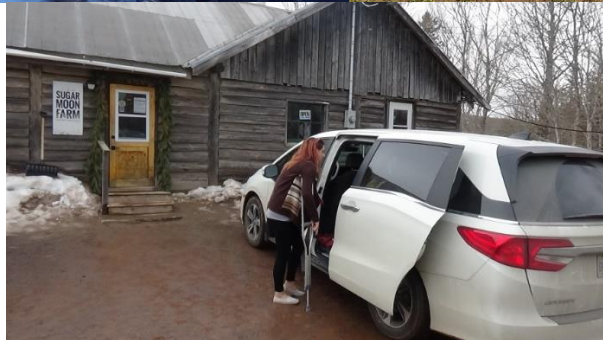


**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Halifax-Dartmouth

CMHA Halifax-Dartmouth Branch Short-Term Projects

2018-2019

**Social Clubs Access Initiative for Disability Service Program Clients
Grocery Bus and Collaborative Kitchen Pilot Project
Recovery Horizons Project**



The Social Clubs Access Initiative for Disability Service Program Clients Living with Mental Illness or Mental Health Problems

The project was funded by the Department of Community Services for one year and managed by Bev Cadham and Margaret Murray with the support of an Advisory Committee: Carole Bethune, Steve Bornemann, Judith Fingard and Anna Quon. An Outreach Worker was hired to engage socially isolated clients of the DCS Disability Support Program with our Social Clubs Program by identifying the barriers that restrict their participation. Freya Kaiser-Derrick worked in the position for the first 8 months and Amanda Davis was hired in the position after Freya left for a full-time position. Freya remained on the Advisory Committee. The Social Outreach Workers interacted with past and potential CMHA Halifax-Dartmouth Social Program Members who were recipients of the DCS Persons with Disabilities Program living in group homes and small options homes to share information, listen, introduce to resources and provide social support. This project also created opportunities for individuals to reconnect with programs and community activities. The support provided was non-judgmental and people were given time to reconnect at their own pace. This project helped our organization's social programs to improve and address unmet needs as we work to address the barriers to participation identified by this project.

Evaluation Plan	Estimated Evaluation	Outcome of the Project
Target Participants Served	70	84
Target Participants regularly attending Daily Social Clubs	26	24
Target for current DSP Client Increased Participation	49	20
Target for new DSP Social Club Membership	30	26
Estimated Time to Impact	12	12

- We have had several individuals begin to reconnect with the club and new Disability Service Program clients join our social clubs.
- Expanded program delivery or access - increased program delivery and improve access and programming.
- New volunteers were recruited for the Social Clubs Program
- New communications activities - This project offered outreach opportunities that helped individuals increase the capacity for CMHA Halifax-Dartmouth to communicate/collaborate more effectively by having increased human resources to spend time at other agencies, shelters and mental health units
- Throughout the project, it has become apparent that an Outreach Worker position would be a benefit to our agency. Efforts will be made to find funds to hire an Outreach Worker, to ensure that we are being proactive in the community and reaching out to potential members that need social support within the community. The role of the Outreach Worker over the past year has been a great addition to the CMHA Halifax-Dartmouth Branch and has helped to increase capacity and awareness of the organization. It has also been a great opportunity to discover the barriers that are preventing people from accessing our services.

Grocery Bus and Collaborative Kitchen Pilot Project

The Grocery Bus and Collaborative Kitchen Pilot Project was a partnership between Canadian Mental Health Association Halifax-Dartmouth Branch (CMHA Halifax-Dartmouth), the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre (DSSC) and the Schizophrenia Society of Nova Scotia (SSNS). The pilot project addressed food security and transportation by providing practical interventions for marginalized adults living with mental illness/mental health problems and isolated seniors. The pilot project (7 months) was funded by a Communities Culture & Heritage Shift Grant. The Project Coordinator was Tamar Ellis and the Management Team was Bev Cadham & Margaret Murray, Co-Managers, CMHA Halifax-Dartmouth Branch; Adrienne Powers, Manager, SSNS and Pam Vaters, Executive Director, DSSC.

- Based on feedback of participants, the Grocery Bus provided much needed access to affordable groceries.
- Feedback from pre and post surveys were overwhelmingly positive.
- The last bus had the largest number of participants and members are asking if the project will be continued.
- Participants were able to learn cooking skills and food hygiene.
- The trips allowed members to go to places they had never been before that are inaccessible by public transportation.
- We had a total of 80 participants in the project

There were 6 Grocery Bus trips, 3 Collaborative Kitchen sessions and 3 picnic preparation sessions for bus trips to the Valley (October), Lunenburg & Mahone Bay (Nov.) & Truro/Sugar Moon Farms (March). The trips were very memorable for participants. The household canteen provided toilet paper, garbage bags, and laundry pods for sale individually, and in a value pack. All items were sold at cost so the canteen will be able to support itself without making any surplus revenue. This will be an aspect of the project that will be continuing as all partner organizations are buying from the household canteen.

58.2% of participants strongly agreed they gained experience that would help support themselves and or their families after the conclusion of the project. This was a 18.2 % increase compared to before the project started. Pre-survey responses show 36.4% of respondents strongly agreed they would use this program again. This number jumped to 72.7% in the post surveys. 78.2 % of participants strongly agreed they would use this project again. There was a 16.4% increase of respondents reporting their well-being improved after the project from 52.7% to 69.1%. Comments on the surveys were very positive, with numerous responses expressing gratitude and their appreciation for the grocery bus and asking for it to continue. All participants were able to fill out questions one through five on the surveys which asked to pick a face to rate the range of agreement with each statement. This was an excellent method for participants with cognitive delays.

The wrap-up party was a great success with food served that had been made from recipes used in the CCK sessions. Members were very excited to receive their recipe books. The cover design by Anna Quon was a colouring page. The recipe books contained plastic sleeves in a folder. This set up was chosen so participants can continue adding their own recipes to the folder. Before the project, participants struggled to get groceries. They would have to take several trips to get to the stores they had to go to get their groceries. This was a great source of stress, which contributed to poor mental health. We hope to continue to offer this type of service by utilizing our van and securing a new grant in 2019/2020 for more staffing resources.

Recovery Horizons Project

The Recovery Horizons Project was funded by the Department of Health and Wellness and helped to reduce social exclusion for marginalized adults living with mental illness and mental health problems, in the Halifax Region, by providing a pilot transportation project for day trips, inaccessible errands and access to the social programs of CMHA Halifax-Dartmouth Branch. The Recovery Horizons Project also created pre and post videos highlighting first voice experiences coping with social exclusion and the impact of the Recovery Horizons Project. The Project has helped to increase participant's relationship to their community by promoting inclusion and social capital, building trust and appreciation for the environments in which they live, reducing barriers to participation and gaining an appreciation for culture in the broader community.

The year long project provided funding for part-time staffing and a grant to assist with the purchase of a van. The additional funding for the van was provided by a grant from HRM and the generous support of Portland Street Honda. The project was staffed by Meaghan Goudey and Garry Wilson. Meaghan left the project in December when she moved on to another position. Our Co-Managers supervised the project. Recovery Horizons was also assisted by Student Placements: OT Master's Students (1st year), who worked on the pre and post videos. Videographer, Robyn Badger, provided consultation in March.

Statistically, participation in the Recovery Horizons Project showed a mean age of 56 with the youngest being 34 and the eldest 73. Of that number, 88% of participants were female. The total number of participants was 110. Simple but meaningful trips to a coffee shop, a drive to the seaside, drives into old neighbourhoods and to thrift stores were successful. The verbal feed back from participants was overwhelming. Comments such as, "This is where I grew up. We used to play up the road on the hill. I can't believe the old place is still standing. " The comment from this individual came after her request to visit some side streets in an area of the city. It had been over twenty-five years since she had lived or visited this neighbourhood. "I never thought I would ever be back here again. It brought back so many memories and thoughts. I am happy you could bring me here." An older gentleman who had moved back to Halifax after living in another province explained, while we were driving about, the number of changes he witnessed during the trip and how the landscape had been significantly altered. He spoke about homes and businesses that no longer exist in the wake of modern development. He, too, was most appreciative of the ability to travel to parts of the city he remembered as a younger man. These are the lives of people who are isolated and who without an intervention such as the van would not endeavour to explore their own community. "I didn't know we could go to so many places here at the airport. I always thought only certain people were allowed in these places."

Owning our own van, has greatly enhanced our ability to provide social transportation and reduce social exclusion for the members of our social programs. We will continue to offer van trips, with the assistance of current staff and volunteers but will be working to secure more resources to expand this work. The Recovery Horizons Project promoted the development of skill sets such as building comfort and confidence, ego-strength, peer comradery, effectively overcoming barriers to mental and physical restraints and the impact of illness, and ultimately teaches the right to exist in and be included in the community. Getting support in local communities can make a difference to those experiencing isolation and loneliness. Grass roots initiatives run by organizations firmly rooted in community have a hugely positive impact on people who are socially isolated or experience regular feelings of loneliness.

